

My name is Bilal Dabir Sekou, I am a voter from Vernon and chair of the Common Cause in Connect State Advisory Board and a member of the Common Cause National Governing Board. Passing both S.B. 184 and H.B. 5262 (**Continuing Absentee Voting in 2022 due to COVID19**) is extremely important to me because I believe that to ensure democracy works for everyone, voting and elections must be free, fair, and accessible. Continuing absentee voting in 2022 is a way to ensure that voting remains accessible to Connecticut residents still being affected by COVID-19.

Moreover, I teach political science at the University of Hartford and I always emphasize to my students that access to the franchise is the most fundamental right a citizen should have in a democratic society. Everyone who is eligible to vote should have an opportunity to vote.

In short, I believe voters should be able to vote this year by absentee ballot as COVID19 persists. I voted using an absentee ballot for the first time in 2020 because of my concerns about COVID19. **Please continue the COVID19 safety measures of 2020 and 2021 for 2022 and allow for everyone who fears exposure to COVID19 to vote by absentee ballot.**

More than 650,000 Connecticut voters voted by absentee ballot in the 2020 CT General Election—which means they voted early on their own schedules. This led to record breaking 80% voter turnout. Listen to the voters, the choice is clear. **Please protect the freedom to vote and pass S.B. 184 and H.B. 5262.**

**Thank you.**

Bilal Dabir Sekou, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Political Science  
University of Hartford  
Department of Social Science,  
Hillyer College  
200 Bloomfield Ave  
West Hartford, CT 06117  
860.768.4231  
[Sekou@hartford.edu](mailto:Sekou@hartford.edu)